



Are you including the operational testers up front?

Under evolutionary acquisition and the new DoD 5000 series, test and evaluation is to be integrated throughout the acquisition process, with up-front involvement of the T&E [test and evaluation] community in the requirements process and in the design of an integrated test and evaluation strategy.

The new DoD 5000 series creates integrated Service/OSD [Office of the Secretary of Defense] test teams and emphasizes early T&E involvement. Particularly important is that you include

the Service Operational Test Agencies. They can help you early with requirements issues, with operational emphasis in the RFP, and with test and evaluation planning. Confronting such matters later will only increase costs and delay schedules, placing your program at unnecessary risk. If you follow the new DoD 5000 series, and involve the operational testers very early, it will help you avoid putting your program at unnecessary risk.

In Conclusion, "Don't Skimp"

So my advice for you is pretty simple. Don't skip on DT, because if you do it will kill you when you get to OT. Don't assume that contractor DT is as good as

government DT. Worry about realistic operational loadings and realistic operational environments. Don't believe that models and simulations tell you things they were never programmed to do. And don't wait until OT to try things for the first time. And ask yourselves again and again, "Am I betting my entire program on this one test?" "Am I placing my program at unnecessary risk?" If you are, you need more, and earlier testing — which is exactly what the new DoD 5000 series calls for.

Editor's Note: The author welcomes questions or comments on this article. Contact him at director@dote.osd.mil.

ATTENTION DAU STUDENTS

Important Information on Accreditation

Since its inception, the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) has been committed to maintaining the highest possible educational standards and providing the acquisition community with the right learning products and services to make smart business decisions. This commitment requires high standards for excellence and continual drive to improve everything we do.

With this in mind, DAU is now working in partnership with the DoD Chancellor for Education and Professional Development to comply with a recent directive from the Deputy Secretary of Defense stating: "DoD civilian education and professional development activities shall meet the standards established by external accreditation entities recognized by the Department of Education."

After researching several national institutional accreditation agencies recognized by the Department of Education, DAU chose the Council on Occupational Education (COE). COE's fundamental goals match DAU's in the areas of quality assurance, continuous improvement, and involving top leadership, staff, and faculty in supporting the DAU mission.

Accreditation requires DAU to evaluate itself against a set of 10 standards, referred to by COE as a *Self-Study*. This evaluation offers the opportunity to identify areas for improvement or assess and validate DAU's approach to education and training.

On Sept. 19, 2000, DAU sent a *Letter of Intent* seeking candidacy with COE to begin the process that will continue until February 2002 when the COE Commission will convene to review and grant accreditation based on the *Self-Study*. The Commission also sends visiting teams to each campus to determine if DAU is in compliance with its own policies and criteria as well as those of the Commission.

A Steering Committee led by the DAU Provost, Rich Reed, will be comprised of the four campus Deans. The Committee is empowered to develop strategies, goals, and milestones and establish working groups to assess DAU's strengths and areas for improvement in relationship to each of the 10 standards of the *Self-Study*. These working groups will consist of a cross-section of DAU's faculty and staff.

Through this rigorous criteria-based self-evaluation, DAU will have an opportunity to reinforce its training mission, strategic vision, and institutional value of academic excellence.

Dr. Lenore Sack (sack_lenore@dau.mil) and Evelyn Layton (layton_evelyn@dau.mil) will lead this initiative. Sack is Chief Administrative Officer and Layton is the Accreditation Liaison Officer. They have full responsibility to ensure an effective evaluation is conducted to meet DAU's accreditation goal.